

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A
SUBJECT: UN PERSONNEL: OPI GENEVA

1. MISSION HAS LEARNED THAT DECISION IS IMMINENT ON WHO IS TO SUCCEED CHARLES EDOUARD BOURBONNIERE (D-1, CANADA) AS CHIEF OF OFFICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION AT U.N.'S GENEVA OFFICES. OUR INFORMANTS SAY THAT, AS IS INVARIABLY THE CASE WITH POSITIONS OF SUCH A LEVEL, DECISION WILL BE MADE BY SYG WALDHEIM HIMSELF.

2. USUN NO DOUBT IS AWARE THAT POPOVICH OF U.K., WHOSE APPOINTMENT AS CHIEF OF OPI WAS ANNOUNCED AT SAME TIME AS THAT OF BOURBONNIERE TO VIENNA AS WALDHEIM'S SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR MOVE OF AGENCIES THERE, HAS DECIDED FOR PERSONAL REASONS NOT TO TAKE THE JOB. CONTENTION NOW HAS NARROWED TO TWO CANDIDATES, WITH EITHER OF WHOM MISSION COULD LIVE COMFORTABLY: GERALD GREGOIRE (P-5, FRANCE), LONG-TIME CHIEF OF AUDIO-VISUAL SERVICES IN OPI, DEPUTY CHIEF TO BOURBONNIERE AND NOW ACTING CHIEF OF OPI; AND TONY CURNOW (P-4, NEW ZEALAND), A U.N. INFORMATION SPECIALIST ACTING AS CHIEF OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS FOR THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE (ECE).

3. BOTH ARE HIGHLY QUALIFIED PROFESSIONALS IN THE INFORMATION FIELD. THEY ALWAYS HAVE BEEN HELPFUL TO
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MISSION AND WE HAVE WORKED WELL WITH BOTH, THOUGH FOR A MUCH LONGER PERIOD WITH GREGOIRE SIMPLY BECAUSE HE HAS BEEN HERE MUCH LONGER. THE MAIN DIFFERENCE IS THAT GREGOIRE IS 52, CURNOW HIS JUNIOR BY 10 TO 15 YEARS, THAT GREGOIRE IS MORE SENIOR IN GRADE, AND THAT HE HAS BEEN IN GENEVA OPI SCENE SINCE 1948 WHILE CURNOW HAS BEEN HERE LESS THAN TEN YEARS.

4. GREGOIRE, WHO NOW PROUDLY RECALLS HIS AMERICAN MOTHER, APPARENTLY HAS BACKING OF AMBASSADOR COTTAFIVI (ITALY), RECENTLY INSTALLED DIRECTOR GENERAL OF U.N.'S GENEVA OFFICES, OF FRENCH GOVERNMENT, OF U.N. PERSONNEL PEOPLE IN NEW YORK, AND OF A SUBSTANTIAL PART OF THE PRESS CORPS AT THE PALAIS. CURNOW'S SUPPORT COMES MAINLY FROM ASSISTANT SYG AKATANI IN NEW YORK AND FROM BOURBONNIERE, WHO FOR A LONG TIME HAS BEEN ON BAD TERMS WITH GREGOIRE. HIS BOSS, ECE DIRECTOR GENERAL JANESZ STANOVNIK (YUGO-SLAVIA) HAS VETOED CURNOW'S RETURN TO OPI ON AT LEAST ONE PREVIOUS OCCASION BECAUSE HE VALUED HIS SERVICES AT THE ECE SO HIGHLY. HOWEVER, THIS WOULD HAVE BEEN A SUBORDINATE POSITION. STANOVNIK WILL NOT STAND IN THE WAY OF CURNOW GETTING THE TOP JOB IN OPI.

5. THE RECORD WILL SHOW -- ALTHOUGH WE CANNOT PUT OUR HANDS ON A COPY OF OUR CABLE AT THAT TIME -- THAT THE MISSION SUPPORTED GREGOIRE FOR THE TOP OPI JOB IN EARLY 1976 WHEN THERE WERE RUMORS THAT BOURBONNIERE WAS LEAVING. WE ARE INCLINED TO DO SO AGAIN, IN PART BECAUSE THE MISSION HAS WORKED WITH HIM SO WELL FOR SO LONG. MORE IMPORTANTLY, WE THINK THAT WITH GREGOIRE IN THE JOB, THE PROSPECTS OF THE ONE AMCIT IN OPI, PRESS SECTION CHIEF CHARLES GAULKIN (P-5), WOULD BE BETTER. GAULKIN HIMSELF SAYS HE COULD WORK EQUALLY WELL WITH ONE OR THE OTHER.

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HOWEVER, HIS SCOPE FOR ACQUIRING GREATER RESPONSIBILITY AND VISIBILITY WOULD BE GREATER WITH AN AUDIO-VISUAL TYPE SUCH AS GREGOIRE THAN WITH CURNOW, A PRESS SPECIALIST LIKE HIMSELF. ALSO, THE MATTER OF SUCCESSION, IN WHICH GAULKIN MIGHT BE A POSSIBLE CANDIDATE, MIGHT COME UP A LOT SOONER WITH GREGOIRE IN THE JOB RATHER THAN CURNOW.

6. UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES WE SUGGEST THAT -- WITH THE DEPARTMENT'S CONCURRENCE -- USUN EXPRESS THE MISSION'S PREFERENCE FOR GREGOIRE TO THE SYG IF THE OCCASION ARISES. MORE URGENTLY, WE SHOULD PUSH FOR GAULKIN, WHO HAS DONE A CREDITABLE JOB SINCE HIS ARRIVAL NEARLY A YEAR AGO, TO BE APPOINTED DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF OPI IN EITHER CASE. GREGOIRE SAYS HE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE CURNOW AS HIS DEPUTY IF GREGOIRE HIMSELF BECOMES CHIEF, BUT THAT IS NOT IN THE CARDS. THE DEPUTY ALSO HAS TO CARRY A FUNCTIONAL JOB, AND IT APPEARS ILLOGICAL TO HAVE AN OPI WITH TWO PRESS SPECIALISTS AND NO AUDIO-VISUAL EXPERT.

7. BEYOND THIS, MISSION SUGGESTS URGENTLY THAT USUN ASCERTAIN WHAT AKATANI'S INTENTIONS ARE WITH REGARD TO

APPOINTING AN AUDIO-VISUAL EXPERT IN OPI, OR A PUBLIC
AFFAIRS CHIEF AT ECE; AND WHETHER THERE IS AN OPENING FOR
A QUALIFIED AMERICAN. VANDEN HEUVEL

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